

BALANCE PLAN

MARINE PROTECTED AREAS FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

1. **Name.** Marine Protected Areas Federal Advisory Committee
2. **Authority.** The Department of Commerce established the Marine Protected Areas Federal Advisory Committee (MPAFAC) in accordance with Executive Order 13158 to provide advice to the Secretaries of Commerce and Interior on implementation of Section 4 of the Order.
3. **Mission/Function.** The MPAFAC will provide such advice and recommendations on how to fulfill responsibilities under section 4 (National System of Marine Protected Areas) of the Executive Order as may be requested by the Secretary of Commerce through the Under Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere and by the designee of the Secretary of the Interior.

The Executive Order does not specify the composition of the MPAFAC, but requires that "the Department of Commerce and the Department of the Interior shall seek the expert advice and recommendations of non-Federal scientists, resource managers, and other interested persons and organizations through a Marine Protected Area Federal Advisory Committee."

4. **Points of View.** Expertise needed to accomplish MPAFAC tasks and provide necessary perspectives include the following. The approximate number of representatives with this perspective is noted in parenthesis.
 - Commercial fishing (4)
 - Recreational fishing (3)
 - Ocean industry (e.g. energy, undersea cables, etc) (3)
 - Conservation (5)
 - State resource managers (2)
 - Tribal and indigenous representatives (3)
 - Natural science (5)
 - Social science (2)
 - Cultural resource management (2)
 - Non-consumptive uses (e.g. diving, tourism) (1)

As noted in the Charter, the MPAFAC will be reduced in size from a 30-member Committee to a 20-member Committee by 2011. At this time, the MPAFAC will be re-balanced to ensure the maintenance of diverse expertise and perspectives. While sectors will have fewer representatives, the Department of Commerce (DOC) and the Department of the Interior (DOI) intend for all the sectors listed above to continue to be represented.

When the Committee was formed in 2003, DOC decided to appoint all members as Representative members because of the controversial nature of marine protected areas, and the desire to have members represent their broader constituencies.

5. **Other Balance Factors.** DOC and DOI also consider geographic diversity, expertise in marine management/conservation issues, leadership in marine management/conservation issues, experience working productively with Committees and workgroups, and representation of ethnic and gender diversity.
6. **Candidate Identification Process.** Candidates are identified through the following process. A call for nominations is published in the Federal Register. In addition, the call for nominations is posted on the mpa.gov public website, and is sent to newsletters and

organizations representing the interest groups represented on the MPAFAC. A review group of staff from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and DOI review the candidates. This group includes the Director of the National Marine Protected Areas Center; the Designated Federal Officer; and program staff from the National Marine Fisheries Service, the National Park Service, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Using criteria described above (both sectors and other balance factors), the review group recommends a slate of nominees and alternates to DOC and DOI that collectively address the MPAFAC needs for expertise, diversity and balance. Once approved by the leadership of both agencies, these nominees are then notified and begin the background check process.

In the event of a vacancy, the NOAA/DOI review group consults to confirm that the vacancy should be filled by the interest group that formerly occupied it, or to develop a rationale for modifying the balance on the MPA FAC. Once the sector has been confirmed or modified, the National Marine Protected Areas Center follows the recruiting process described above. Unexpected vacancies are typically unfilled for 6-12 months, given the length of time needed for candidate review, completing background checks, and appointing members.

Members are appointed for one, non-renewable four year term. Every two years, half the MPAFAC members' terms expire. This provides an opportunity to appoint new members while retaining continuity.

7. **Subcommittee Balance.** The National Marine Protected Areas Center makes a proactive effort to ensure balance on the Subcommittees. Members are asked for their preference regarding their Subcommittee assignment, but are informed that they may not receive their first choice if changes must be made to ensure balance. The Designated Federal Officer makes final Subcommittee assignments based on member preferences and sectoral and geographic balance.
8. **Date Prepared/Updated.** October 12, 2010.